

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

February 1, 2008

The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on
Banking, Housing, and
Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on
Banking, Housing, and
Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Dodd and Ranking Member Shelby:

I write in strong support of S. 2523, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007 introduced by Senator Kerry. I urge the Banking Committee to favorably report S. 2523 and its related funding provisions contained in other legislation to the Senate floor as soon as possible.

Last year, I introduced S. 427, the Affordable Housing Expansion and Public Safety Act, to boost the availability of affordable housing for Americans throughout the country. One of the provisions of my legislation calls on Congress to create a national affordable housing trust fund to help address the number of families facing severe housing cost burdens throughout the country. House passage of legislation creating such a trust fund and recent introduction of legislation by Senator Kerry establishing such a trust fund makes it all the more urgent that the Senate pass this legislation and its related funding provisions this year.

Unfortunately, affordable housing is becoming less, not more, available in the United States and addressing the rising demand for affordable housing is one of the most critical issues we face as a nation. In addition to continuing to support increased funding for worthy programs like the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program and the HOME program, we also need to lend our support to producing more affordable housing throughout communities in our many states by creating a national affordable housing trust fund.

Hundreds of local housing trust funds have been created in cities and states throughout the country, including in my state of Wisconsin. I continue to hear from housing advocates in Wisconsin about the important role a national housing trust fund can play in supporting ongoing affordable housing efforts at the local and state level.

This nation faces a severe shortage of affordable housing for our most vulnerable citizens. S. 2523 and its related financing provisions contained in other legislation should be taken up by this Committee as soon as possible. I thank you for your commitment to expanding affordable housing opportunities and I look forward to working with you to move these pieces of legislation forward this year in a fiscally responsible manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Russell D. Feingold". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Russell" being more prominent and the last name "Feingold" following in a similar style.

Russell D. Feingold
U.S. Senator